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ORE needs (pre - 1950)

See especially pp. 9

29 April 1957
H. P. G.

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: List of Selected Historical Records in the
"Coordination Area, ORR," 1953-55

1. As of August 1955, when the DD/S Records Management Staff last made a comprehensive survey of the current and non-current records of ORR's Coordination Area (an organization which, incidentally, has since then been abolished, and its functions divided elsewhere in ORR—and in OBI as well), the records of this Area totalled some 90 different and separately organized files (or "series", as they are called by the RM people). These 90 were exclusive of some 50 series of ORR/C/BID, which have presumably been transferred to OBI.

2. Most of these 90 "coordination" files antedate 1953, when the Historical Staff's current interest begins. Of this total, some 37 series have been selected by me as those most likely to contain useful historical evidence for the 1953-56 history—useful from one or more of several points of view, e.g.: useful because of the types of basic documents it contains; useful because of the comprehensive nature of a given file; or useful because of the particular way in which a given file is organized and/or indexed.

3. The listing below is based entirely on the RM Staff's survey, that is, on its "Records Control Schedule" for ORR, dated August 1955, Secret (on file in the RM Staff), which I examined

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today. In other words, it is not based on our first-hand inspection of the files themselves. (This next step can be done, as necessary, when we get proper clearance with ORR, and after we have selected more precisely those aspects of ORR's history that we will be actively concerned with.) Nor does the listing indicate which records may by now (almost two years later) have been destroyed, or re-filled, or transferred to some other office, or retired to the CIA Records Center. The listing nevertheless does provide, it is hoped, an immediate, preliminary bibliographical introduction to one of several major parts of the history of ORR (and of OBI) for the period 1953-56. The occasional parenthetical comments that have been added below (by myself) are intended to call attention informally to the special historical value of this or that file, or to suggest some of the practicable short-cuts that might be followed in using this or that file for historical-investigation purposes.

4. Each series entry below indicates, in general:

1. How a file is commonly known (that is, its title); this is useful especially for borrowing specific files from ORR and for citing them later in our footnotes;
2. Whether the file covers all or only a part of the period 1953-56;
3. How bulky (or small) the file is;
4. What kinds of typical documents it contains, and what general subjects or intelligence procedures it deals with;
5. How the file is organized, and whether it is indexed (that is, what short-cuts can be profitably pursued in our research);

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6. Whether the file is in danger of being destroyed as a "temporary" or "non-record" file before we have had a chance to use it.

5. As a caution to whoever will be using this listing as a bibliographical introduction to OHR's history (and to OBI's history), there are three other major, parallel groups of OHR records (in addition to the group described below) for the period 1953-56. These other groups are separately listed, selectively, in three other Historical Staff memoranda, as follows:

1. List of Selected Historical Records of OHR (central records); 1953-56 (memo of April 25, 1957, Secret);
2. List of Selected Historical Records of the "Economic Research Area," OHR, 1953-56 (memo of May 2, 1956); and
3. List of Selected Historical Records of the "Geographic Research Area," OHR, 1953-56 (memo of May 2, 1957).

Furthermore, the reader is reminded that, because of the "echeloning" of CIA's administrative organization and (in turn) the layered echeloning of its record-keeping, there are highly significant OHR-related historical records to be found in records elsewhere in CIA, especially in the files of the O/DCI (see memo of April 12), and in the files of the DD/I (see memo of April 11).

6. Furthermore, insofar as OHR's functions with respect to the NIS are involved, there are the records of OBI itself, which inherited OHR's functions (along with many of its records) in the NIS field (except for the "economic" chapter), sometime in 1955 or 1956. (The latter records will, similarly, be separately listed in another Historical Staff memorandum, still to be prepared. The OHR/OBI records totalled some 50 separate and differently organized series, as of 1955, as I understand from the HRS Staff.)

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ORR Coordination Area

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related material." Also includes "administrative and housekeeping" sub-file, and a "convenience file (Reading)," the latter containing carbons of outgoing memos, as well as "extra copies of...monthly reports, terms of reference, etc." The latter two files are "temporary" to be destroyed in 3 and 1 years respectively, while the rest is "permanent," to be sent to the Records Center in two years.

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